PRESIDENT: I do not hear the honourable member at all. Will he kindly repeat the angwer?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: Sir, on account of gale...

PRESIDENT: What is the answer of the Honourable member, I do not hear.

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: Sir, for transport facilities the boats used were sometimes not useful. Sometimes, loss is incurred because the boats are in a bad condition; and sometimes through gale they are damaged. But now, good boats are put into the water and transport is being continued without much loss.

MR. P. KOCHUKRISHNA PILLAI: How could you account for the loss of Rs. 10,500 in 1119, if some sufficient precautions have been taken?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: Sir, it cannot be taken because the gale, the bad weather—all these things cannot be prevented.

PRESIDENT: Canoes were used in that year, and after the best enquiry it was found that the damage was due to the tempest or the high gales. It was not due to any bad handling that the loss occurred.

MR. P. KOCHUKRISHNA PILLAI: Cannot we then presume gross dereliction of duty on the part of the officers?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: No.

MR. A. P. UDAYABHANU: Is it not because the boats became leaky and were not repaired that the loss occurred?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: No.

Food grains taken delivery of by Food Department.

413 ✻ **MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI** (*Chirayinkil* cum *Nedumangad*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) the number of bags of food grains taken delivery of by the Food Department of Government at the Central Railway Station, Trivandrum, during the first ten months of the year 1120;

(*b*) the rate of wages per bag given for unloading from the wagon; and

(*c*) the rate of wages per bag given for transporting and stocking it in the godowns at Chalai?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: (*a*) 3,31,914 bags of rice

(*b*) A rate of 3/4 anna per bag is paid for unloading from railway wagons, loading in lorries, unloading, weighing and stacking in godowns;

(*c*) 1 anna 9 pies per bag of 162 lbs., weight for transport by lorries.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Is it a contract that is fixed up for this work?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: There are contracts for the loading and unloading and contracts for the transport.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Is it a contract fixed up after inviting tenders by notification?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: The Depot Officers fixed the contracts for the loading and unloading. It is presumed that it is done by inviting tenders.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Is the contract on lorries also fixed?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR: I think so.

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MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : May I know who the contractors are ?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : The Trading Co., is the transport contractor. For the lorries other local contractors are fixed. The Depot Officers give the contract for the labour work

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : May I know the names of such contractors ?

PRESIDENT : How does the question of the names of the contractors arise from a question which relates to the contract of bags ?

Stock of food grains.

414 * MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : Will the Government be pleased to state :

(*a*) whether there has been any shortage of stock of food grains in any of the Government depots during the years 1118, 1119 and 1120;

(*b*) if so, the names of the Government depots in which shortages have occurred with the respective quantity (in tons) of each shortage; and

(*c*) the total loss sustained on this account ?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) Verification of food grains in stock at the several Government Depots has been taken up and is now going on. Correct particulars of the shortage at each of the depots and the loss sustained by Government on this account can be furnished only after the stock verification is over.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : May I know whether there was any shortage in any of the bags so far ?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : There might be shortage, it is being looked into. The stock verification is being taken up and it is possible to answer that only after the results are known.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : May I take it that no verification has been completed so far in the Depots ?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : Verifications have been so far by the Depot Officers.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : Has any report come from any of the depots ?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : There are shortages.....

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : My question is not whether there was any shortage.

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : Whether any deficit has occurred or not, it is not possible for me to say now. I have not definite figures.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : I do not want any definite figure, but I want to know whether any report comes from the depots.

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : There might be shortages that is what I can just give you.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI : Have Government called for any report with regard to this shortage ?

MR. T. K. GOPALAN NAIR : No. The stock verification work is now being done. For the purpose of seeing whether there are shortages and the figures in that connection the verification has to be completed.

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